



**BLACKEST NIGHT**  
**AFTERMATH**

**890**

AUG '10



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DC COMICS PRESENTS, with pardonable pride, the new creative team of

PAUL CORNELL: *writer* • PETE WOODS: *artist*

BRAD ANDERSON: *colorist* • ROB LEIGH: *letterer*

DAVID FINCH, JOE WEEMS & PETER STEIGERWALD: *cover* • FINCH & STEIGERWALD: *variant cover*  
who in turn (presumably) PROUDLY PRESENT

LEX LUTHOR INC.

# THE BLACK RING

PART ONE



QUESTION:  
WHAT ARE YOU  
DOING?

BORN IN SMALLVILLE,  
BUT BELIEVING HIMSELF  
SUPERIOR, HE MURDERED HIS  
FATHER TO ESCAPE SMALL-TOWN AMERICA,  
AND BUILT AN EMPIRE ON HIS GENIUS.  
THE SWORN ENEMY OF SUPERMAN, HE HAS  
VOWED THAT THE WORLD WILL TURN ITS  
BACK ON THE MAN OF STEEL, AND INSTEAD  
EMBRACE HUMANITY'S CHAMPION...  
AND FUTURE RULER...

LEX LUTHOR

WIL MOSS: *asst. editor*  
MATT IDELSON: *editor*  
SUPERMAN created by  
JERRY SIEGEL &  
JOE SHUSTER





WHAT AM I DOING?

I'M MEDITATING.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

STATEMENT: IF WE LET YOU GO FROM HERE--



--SUPERMAN HAS LEFT METROPOLIS.

HE CAN'T SAVE YOU.

Heh.

AS IF I REQUIRE HIS HELP.

LISTEN.



YOU HAVEN'T ASKED FOR A RANSOM.

YOU HAVEN'T INTERROGATED ME.

THIS IS THE FIRST THING YOU'VE SAID TO ME: SCARING THEN KILLING ME ISN'T THE GAME.

SO--

--YOU'RE UP TO SOMETHING ELSE.

I CAN'T WAIT TO FIND OUT WHAT.



STATEMENT: YOU...YOU MUST THINK ABOUT YOUR SITUATION!



OH, I AM.

I'M THINKING ABOUT HOW I GOT HERE.



"I'M THINKING ABOUT THE EVENTS OF A WEEK AGO..."

SO ALL WE'D HAVE TO DO TO INCREASE THE SENSOR'S RANGE--

AND THE POWER.

NO--

I NEED RANGE AND POWER TO FIND THE LANTERN RINGS.

NO, BECAUSE--

DON'T KEEP SAYING THAT WORD.

NO, LISTEN--

MR. LUTHOR, YOU CAN'T HAVE THE POWER.

YOU CAN'T HAVE--

SPALDING--

HAVE THAT MAN FIRED.

!

WITH REFERENCES AND RUMORS SO HE NEVER WORKS IN THIS BUSINESS AGAIN.





"I DO THINK HE OVERREACTED..."

--KILL YOU, YOU SON OF--!

WHD

GET HIM AWAY FROM--!

--A FAMILY TO FEED! HE DOESN'T KNOW--!







I CAN EAT  
ANYTIME.

LOIS, WOULD  
YOU CARE TO  
JOIN ME?

I HAVE  
TO DO  
THIS.

YES,  
MR. LUTHOR?

AH, SASKEY,  
I'M GLAD IT'S  
YOU ON  
SHIFT.

I'VE MADE UP  
MY MIND ABOUT THE  
FORMER EMPLOYEE WHO  
ASSAULTED ME.

WOULD YOU  
KILL HIM NOW,  
PLEASE?



"SO YOU FINALLY  
GAVE IN?"

"I HAVE TRIED  
TO SHOW  
MERCY, LOIS--"

"BUT YES,  
I CAN'T STOP--"

"--THINKING  
ABOUT HIM.  
ABOUT HOW  
HE MADE  
ME HELPLESS.  
IF ONLY FOR  
A MOMENT."

**KRAK**

"I CAN'T LET  
HIM LIVE."











—THE POWER  
OF WELDING  
A RING.®







"BUT THE NEED THAT WENT WITH IT..."

THE T-TRUTH...  
WHAT I REALLY  
WANT...

...IS TO BE  
SUPERMAN.



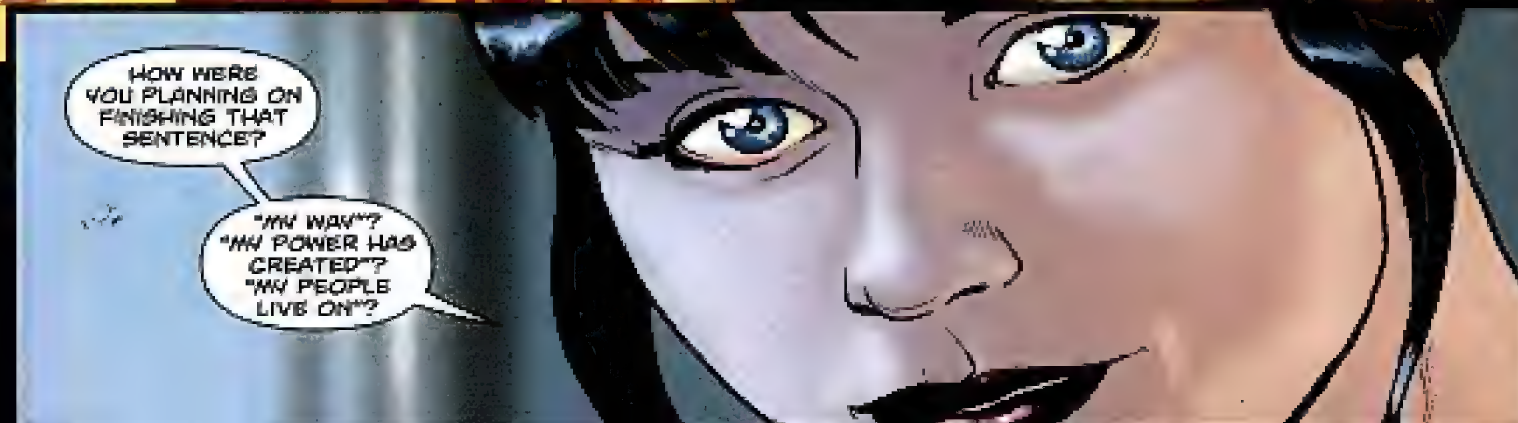
THE THINGS THE  
ORANGE RING MAKES  
ONE DESIRE.

RIDICULOUS.



I DEMAND THEM,  
GUARDIAN!

I WILL HAVE  
THE POWER TO  
SAVE THE  
WORLD MY--




HOW WERE  
YOU PLANNING ON  
FINISHING THAT  
SENTENCE?

"MY WAY?"  
"MY POWER HAS  
CREATED?"  
"MY PEOPLE  
LIVE ON?"









MASTER.  
NOW WE  
UNDERSTAND.

YOU ARE  
FOR HUMANITY,  
AND WE WERE  
NOT.

I THINK  
THIS MIGHT  
SATISFY MY  
NEED.

THE SPAC  
LAB BOYS MAY  
HAVE GONE A  
LITTLE TOO FAR  
THERE.

IS THAT YOUR  
FATHER WITH  
YOU? BUT... ISN'T  
HE DEAD?





THE **BLACK**  
LANTERN RINGS ARE  
THE ODD ONES OUT,  
OF COURSE...

THEY JUST  
DISINTEGRATED.



ALL THAT  
POWER, GONE,  
JUST LIKE THAT.  
NO, I DON'T  
BELIEVE IT.



THERE  
OUGHT TO BE  
TRACES.

I WANT...  
I **NEED** TO FIND...  
SOME PATTERN...  
THAT COULD LEAD  
ME TO THE SECRET  
OF THE RINGS IN  
GENERAL...

HEY—



MAYBE YOU  
SHOULD...

SLEEP  
ON IT?





"WHICH BRINGS US TO TODAY..."

STILL NO SIGN OF AN UNDAMAGED BLACK RING?

NO, SIR.

BUT NO SIGN OF SUPERMAN EITHER?

NO, SIR.

I SHOULD BILL HIM FOR THIS HOLE.\*

\*SUPERMAN INADVERTENTLY DAMAGED A NUMBER OF BUILDINGS IN HIS FIGHT WITH GENERAL ZOD IN *WAR OF THE SUPERMEN #4*.  
--date Foreman Staff

SO HE'S GENUINELY GONE ON THIS JOURNEY OF HIS.

DOUBTLESS TO SEEK MORE POWER.

IN THE FLYOVER STATES, ODDLY.

HOW IRONIC IF HE SHOULD RETURN TO FIND THAT I'D SAVED A GRATEFUL HUMANITY.

HE'D EXPECT ME TO TAKE A FANCY NAME.

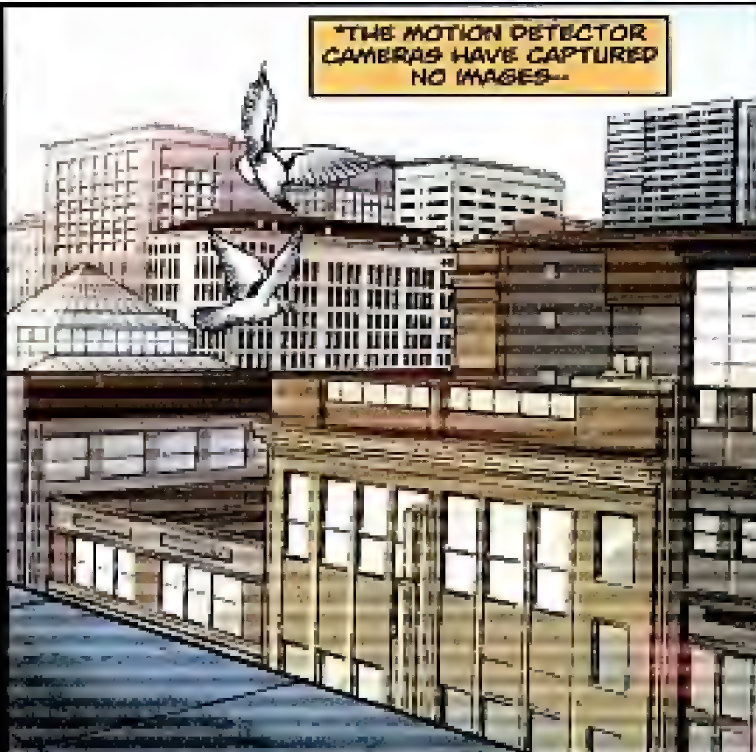
BUT UNLIKE HIM, I'D CHOOSE SOMETHING WITH A RING TO IT.

VERY DROLL, SIR. IT WAS ONCE SAID THAT PUNS ARE THE HIGHEST FORM OF WIT.

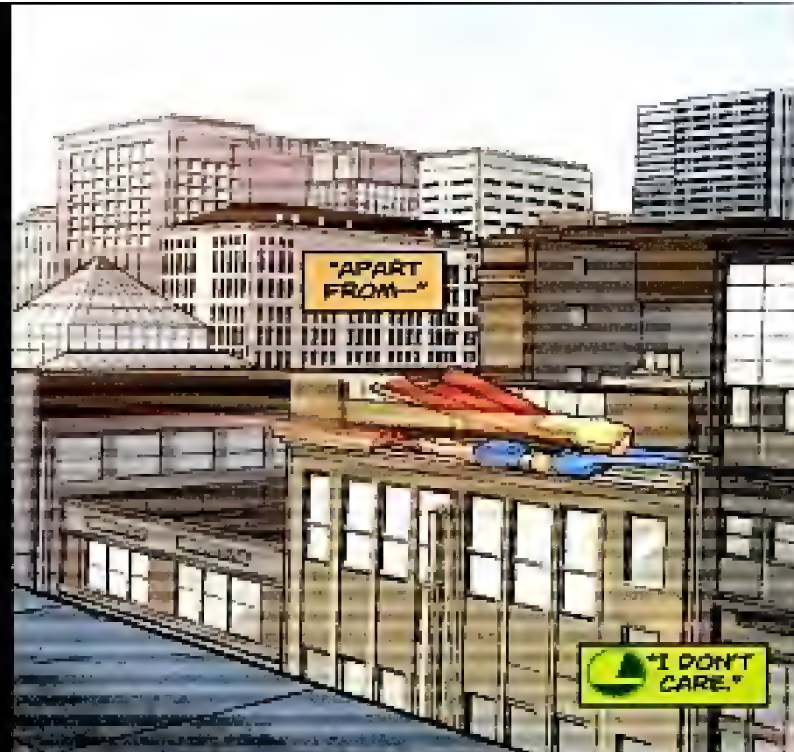
EVERY NOW AND THEN, SPALDING...  
...BUT NO, I'D REALIZE IF YOU WERE GENUINELY MOCKING ME.

TELL ME ABOUT THE SENSORS.





"THE MOTION DETECTOR  
CAMERAS HAVE CAPTURED  
NO IMAGES--"



"APART  
FROM--"

"I DON'T  
CARE."



"STEEL HAS NOT  
BEEN CONTACTED  
BY SUPERMAN."

"HOWEVER, HE  
CONTINUALLY  
ATTEMPTS TO  
OBSERVE OUR  
OPERATIONS--"

"HE'S JUST A GENIUS  
IN A POWERED SUIT.  
NEXT!"



"AND THE GROUND  
SENSORS IN  
SMALLVILLE--"

"WHY IS HE  
STILL--?"

"NEVER MIND.  
DON'T TALK  
TO ME ABOUT  
THAT."

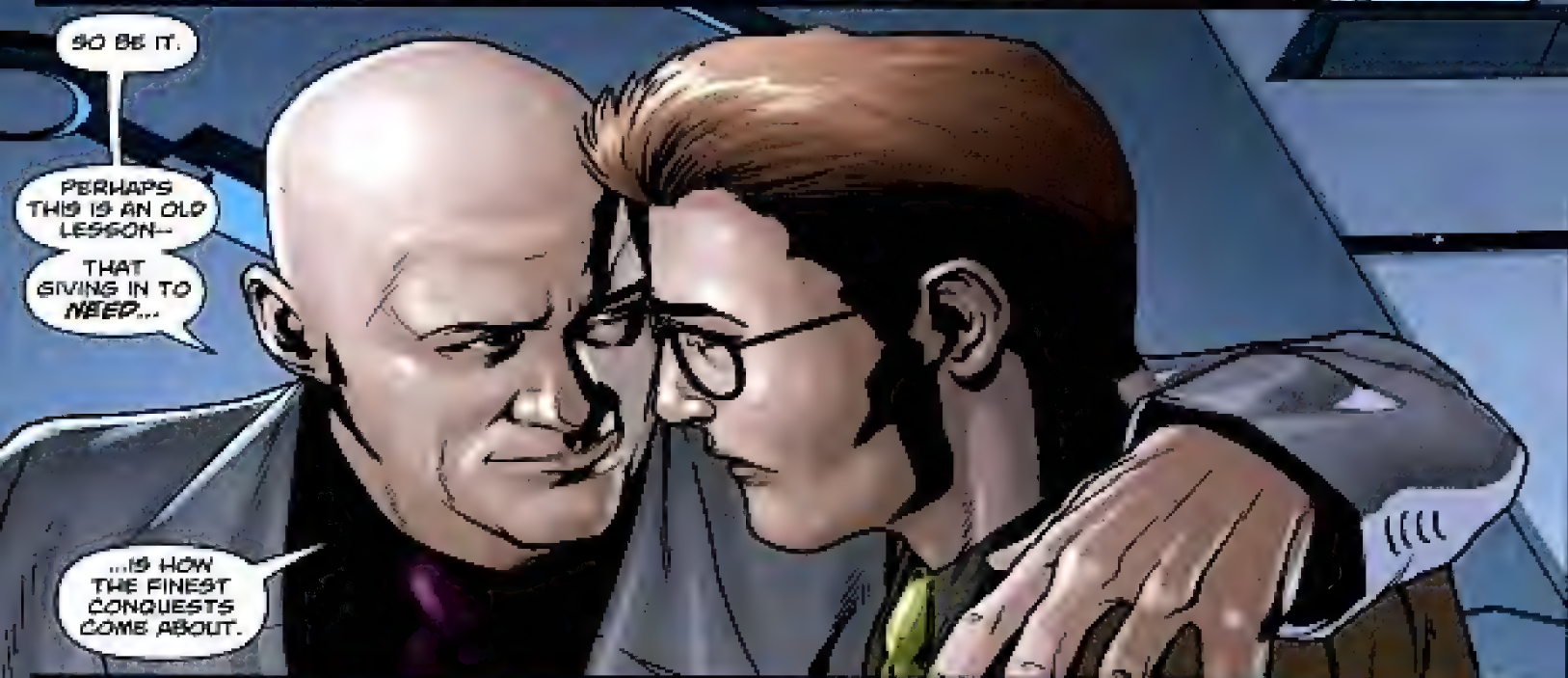


DAMN IT.  
I'VE BEEN PUTTING  
THIS OFF--

THAT'S  
MY DILEMMA,  
SPALDING.

RIGHT NOW,  
NEED IS  
WINNING OVER  
CAUTION.









**LEXCORP INTELLIGENT  
LISTENING ENGINE**  
SUBJECT: "BLACK LANTERN RING  
DESTRUCTION"  
ALL PNEUMONS **ENGAGED**



RETINAS  
PREPARED.

GO.





AH!

"The rings were everywhere—"  
—Daily Planet

"Rings themselves now seen to have—"  
—WGBS.com

"—calling them 'Dark Quarks'—"  
—Coast City Chronicle

"a paper in *Nature* suggests the new unknown force is flowing—"  
—Paper submitted by Dr. Simon Kavanagh at Metropolis Institute of Technology

"A ring is just a structure—"

"—swallowing its own tail."  
—Starchild818  
Mindswipe Forums

"—some new influence on the subatomic world—"  
—@benjamingoldacre

"—*Journal of Particle Physics* ponders what might have caused change in structure of universe—"  
—Fourth World Science News

YES.








THE COMPUTER'S  
TRANSLATING IT INTO A  
VISUAL REPRESENTATION  
NOW. AN INTERDIMENSIONAL  
MAP, WHICH SHOULD...







SO...OKAY, COSMIC RING  
AROUND THE UNIVERSE.  
INTO OTHER DIMENSIONS  
EVEN--

JUST HOW DOES  
THAT HELP YOU GET  
EVEN ONE RING ON  
YOUR FINGER?


AND NOW  
IT SOUNDS LIKE YOUR  
MOTHER.

LOIS--

IF I GO TO THE PLACES INDICATED,  
WHERE THE STRENGTH OF RESIDUAL  
BLACK LANTERN RING ENERGY  
IS STRONGEST--

IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE TO  
SAMPLE THAT ENERGY, WORK OUT  
THE SOURCE CODE OF HOW ALL THE  
RINGS WORK, USE IT TO CREATE  
MY OWN POWER RING.

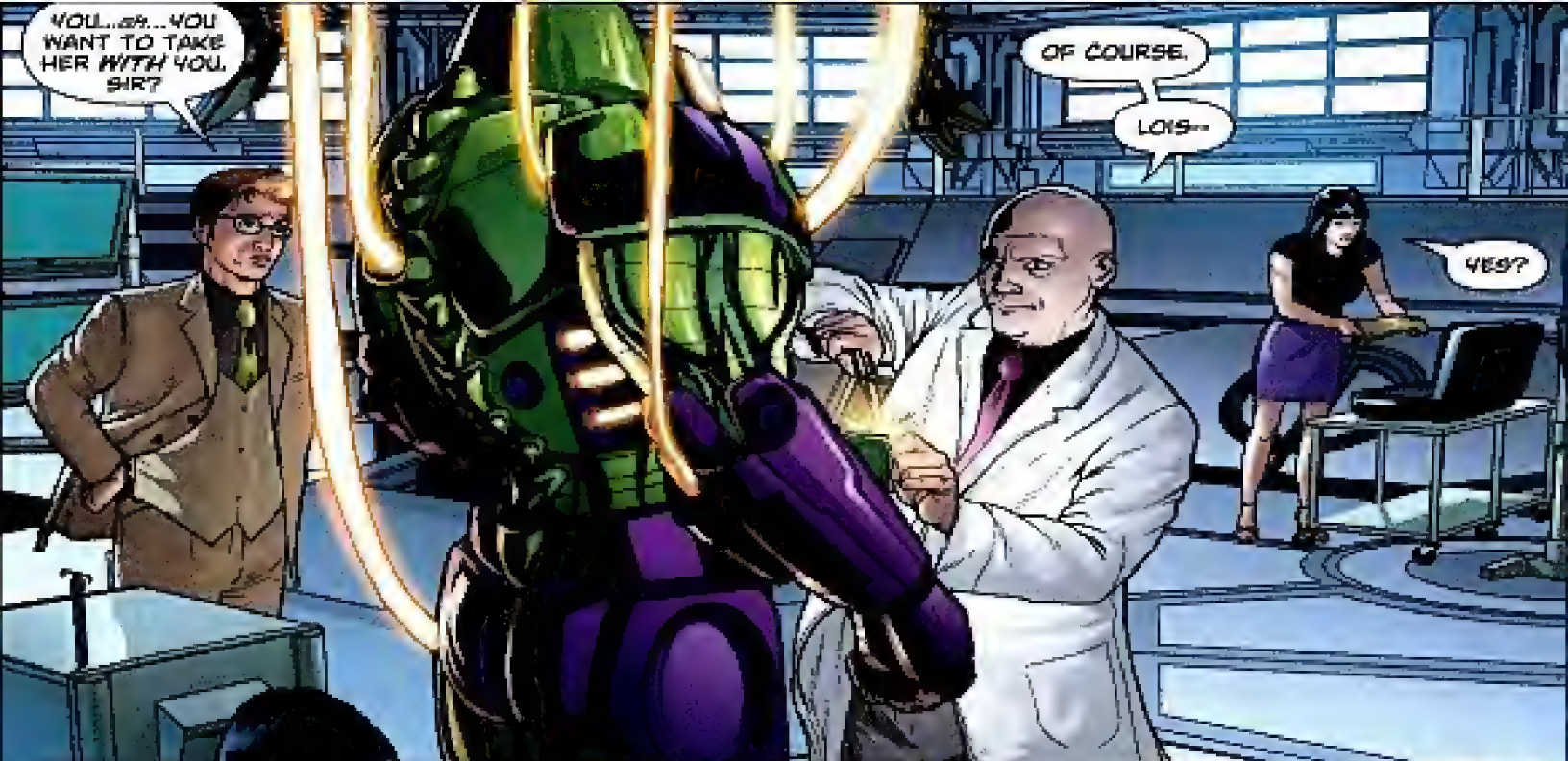
WHAT YOU SEE  
THERE IS MY QUEST,  
MY NEED, MY NEW  
IDENTITY WAITING  
TO BE BORN.



I'M GOING TO  
FIRE UP THE POWER  
SUIT, AND EMBRACE  
MY DESTINY--

--AND YOU'RE  
COMING WITH  
ME.





YOU...~~SA~~...YOU  
WANT TO TAKE  
HER WITH YOU,  
SIR?

OF COURSE.

LOIS--

YES?



GO INTO  
SAFE MODE,  
PLEASE.

WHA--  
BLURRRR



SHE'S DOING  
EXACTLY AS SHE'S  
PROGRAMMED TO:  
OFFERING ME ANOTHER  
PERSPECTIVE,  
CHALLENGING ME--

EVEN  
SURPRISING  
ME.



BUT,  
SIR...

THE PARTS USED  
TO CONSTRUCT HER  
COME FROM BRAINIAC.  
FROM KRYPTONIAN  
TECHNOLOGY--

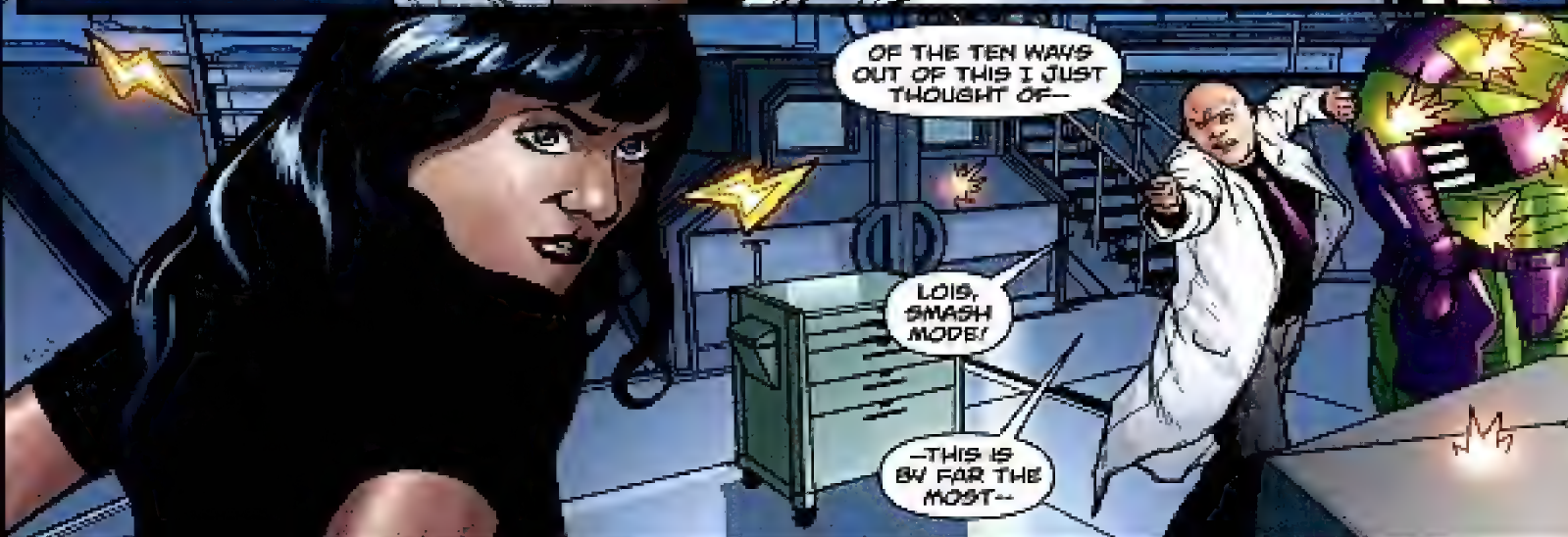
WE DON'T  
KNOW WHAT A  
LOT OF THEM  
EVEN DO.

SPALDING--











—SATISFYING™

GRRRR!

BAMBAMBAMBAM

RAGGGH!











SO, YOU'RE WORKING FOR SOMEONE WHO YOU SEEM TO BE IN MENTAL COMMUNICATION WITH.

WHO SPECIFICALLY WANTED ME HUNG UPSIDE-DOWN, SO I COULD "THINK ABOUT MY SITUATION."

INTERESTING.



STATEMENT: "WORKING FOR--"

EMOTIONAL OUTBURST: AS IF WE HAD A CHOICE!

WE'RE AS TRAPPED AS YOU ARE!



Ah.

SO WHEN DO I MEET THIS POWERFUL PSYCHIC?



WORRIED STATEMENT: I HOPE YOU'RE NOT ACTUALLY GOING TO MEET--

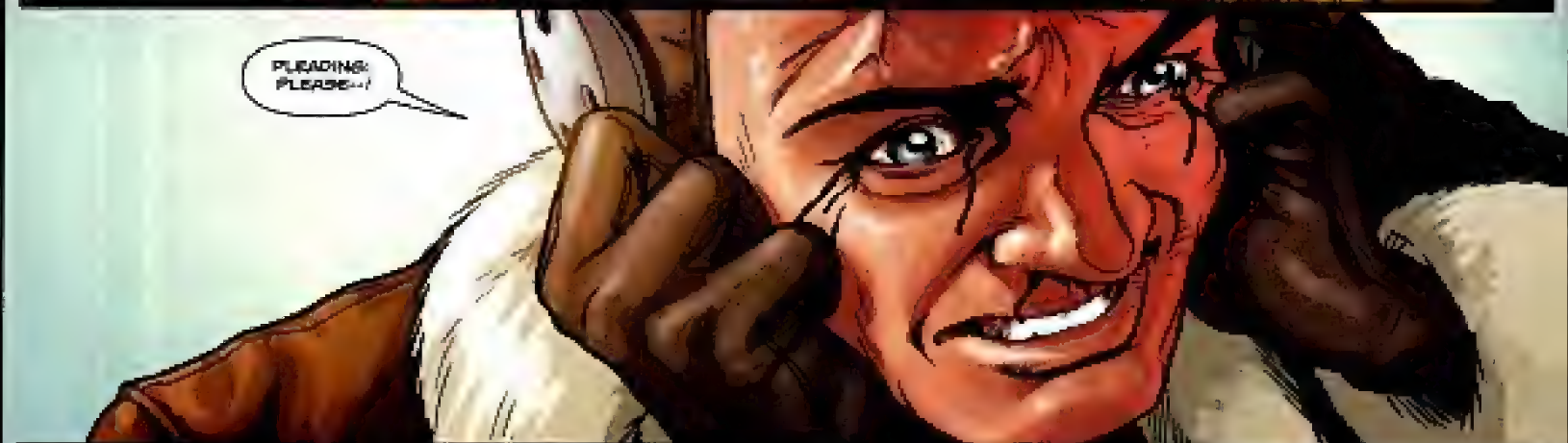
EXCLAMATION: OH.

OH NO.


PLEADING: PLEASE, NO!











LEX LUTHOR,  
YOUR NEEDS  
DON'T MATTER  
NOW.

YOU ARE IN  
THE POWER  
OF--

--MISTER  
MIND!

**NEXT**  
**MIND:**  
**THE GAP.**



# THE MAN OF STEEL!

J. MICHAEL STRACZYNSKI takes on



Illustrated by  
**EDDY BARROWS**

Covers by  
**JOHN CASSADAY**



Illustrated by  
**BOB KRAMER**



# THE AMAZON WARRIOR!

J. MICHAEL STRACZYNSKI takes on

## WELL? WHAT DID YOU THINK?

I'm assuming that by now you've had a chance to check out our stellar anniversary issues **SUPERMAN #700**, **BATMAN #700** and **WONDER WOMAN #600**. Those are pretty impressive milestones for a series to hit... after all, it's not like you can just slap an issue number like that on a title and act like you'd earned it (that would be silly). Our editors and talent put a lot of hard work into making these books something special, and perhaps the most gratifying part is that they herald an exciting new era for some of our biggest characters. Case in point — I'd like to use this space to once again formally welcome J. Michael Straczynski as the regular writer on Superman and Wonder Woman. In just a few weeks his first regular issues of both series (Wonder Woman #601 and Superman #701) will hit the stands and you will finally know what we've known for months — they're *freaking* rule. Seriously, JMS has plans for Wonder Woman and Superman that will have you eagerly awaiting each new issue. If the anniversary issues weren't enough of a clue what he has in store for you, I urge you to check out recent issues of his **THE BRAVE AND THE BOLD** run. Pay special attention to issue #333 guest-starring Wonder Woman because it may be one of the best single carries you will read all year. Now imagine that goodness spread across two monthly titles and you get some idea of where we're going with all of this. So please join me in giving a big DC Nation welcome to JMS and enjoy the awesomeness!

Be seeing you,

- Ian Sattler, Senior Story Editor DCU

# DC NATION

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# BATMAN

A full-page illustration of Batman in his iconic suit, standing with his arms outstretched in a dramatic pose. He is set against a background of intense orange and yellow flames or a fiery sky. The word "BATMAN" is written in large, bold, white letters with a black outline at the top of the page.

AN UNTOLD TALE OF  
BRUCE WAYNE AND HIS  
ADVENTURES BETWEEN  
**BATMAN R.I.P.  
& FINAL CRISIS**

WRITTEN BY  
**GRANT  
MORRISON**

ART BY  
**TONY  
DANIEL**

A TWO-PART STORY  
BEGINNING IN #701

**JULY  
2010**



JADE IS BACK! BUT IS HER RETURN A BLESSING OR A CURSE?

# BRIGHTEST DAY



**JUSTICE  
LEAGUE of  
AMERICA** #46

**JUSTICE  
SOCIETY of  
AMERICA** #41

A 5-PART CROSSOVER EVENT

WRITTEN BY **JAMES ROBINSON** ART BY **MARK BAGLEY**



BEGINNING  
JUNE 2010

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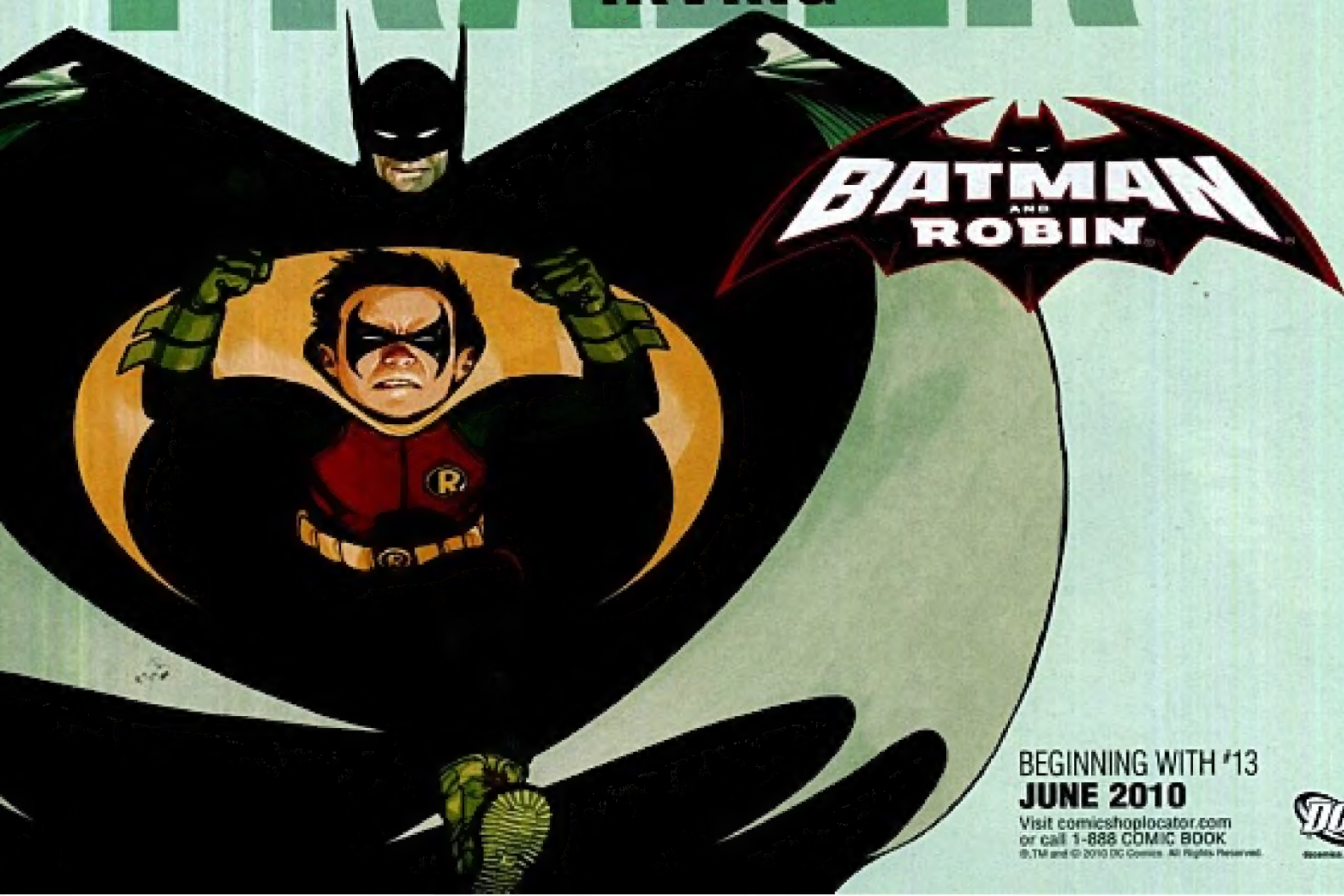


# GRANT

**MORRISON**

# FRAZER

**IRVING**



**BEGINNING WITH #13  
JUNE 2010**

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# WHAT'S NEXT?

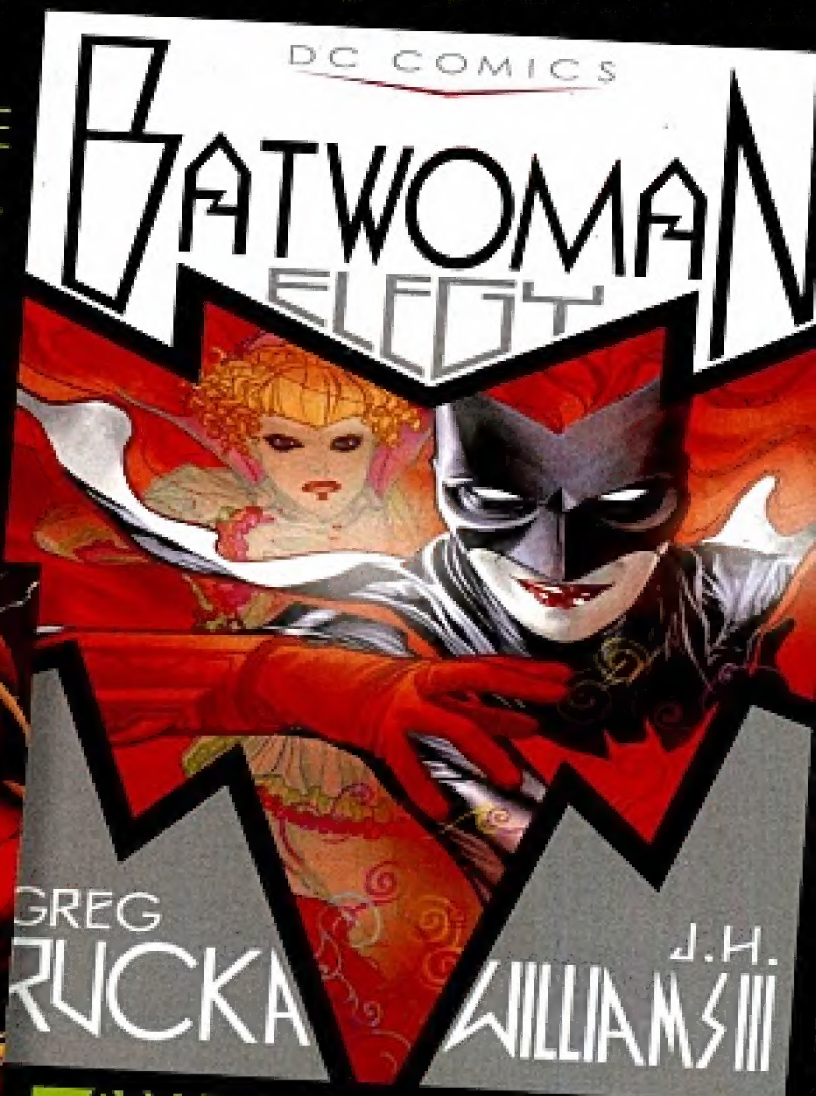
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COMIC BOOKS  
IN YEARS."

—IGN



GEOFF JOHNS & ETHAN VAN SCIVER



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J.H.  
WILLIAMS III

GREG RUCKA & J.H. WILLIAMS III

"A FANTASTIC  
READ."

—MANIA

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FIRST CHAPTERS



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They call him charming... *Beast Charming.*

